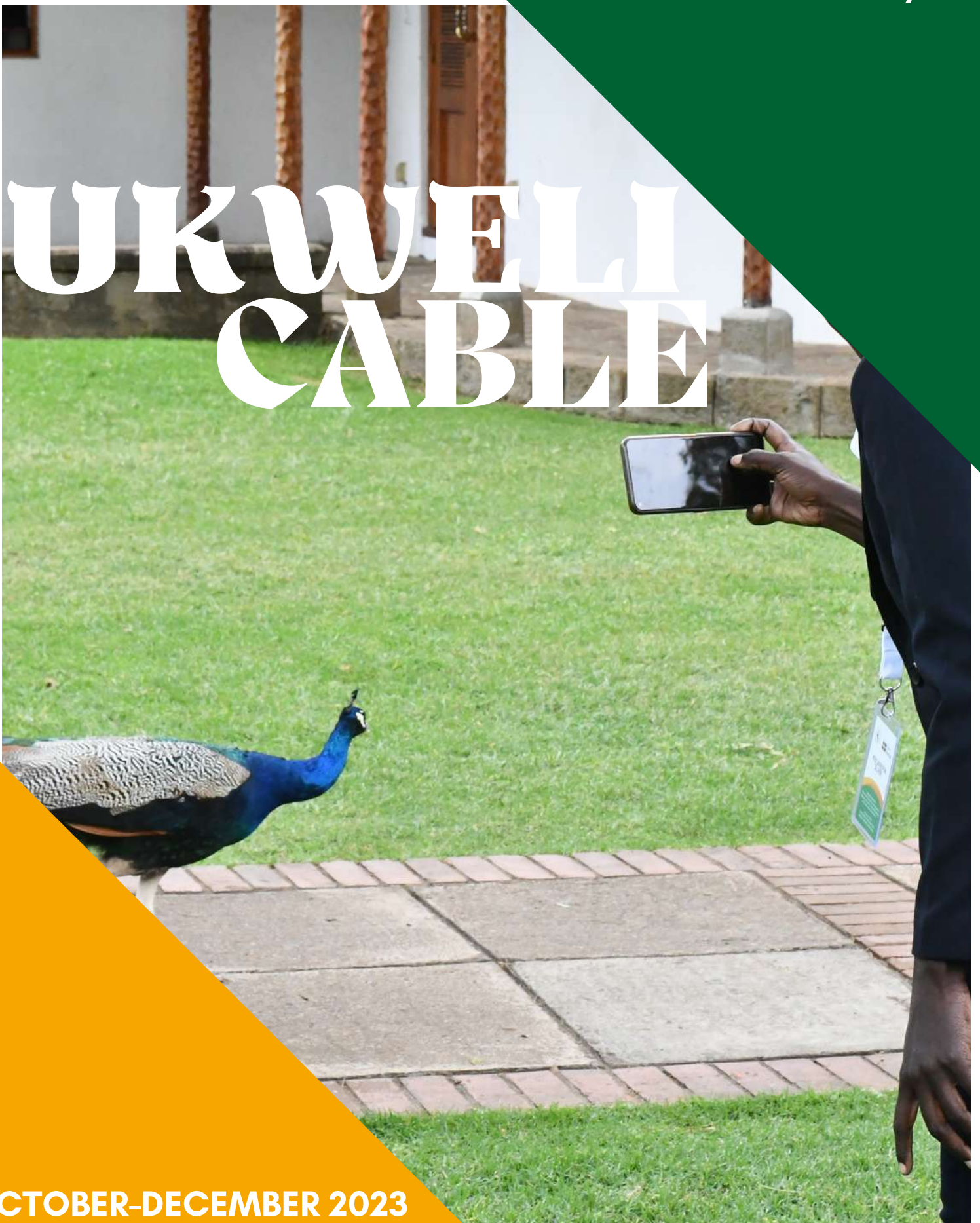


# UKWELI CABLE



**OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2023**



**IGAD CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR PREVENTING AND COUNTERING  
VIOLENT EXTREMISM**

# FOREWORD



Our Esteemed Stakeholder,

New year greetings from the IGAD Centre of Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (ICEPCVE).

The last quarter of year 2023 is a good point for us to take stock of the achievements realised in course of preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) in the East and Horn of Africa.

The Centre has experienced continued growth of its networks in P/CVE; we now boast of strong networks of youth, CSOs, religious leaders, media, researchers. The month of December marked the formation of the pioneer network of legislators committed to advance the P/CVE agenda in their countries.

The Centre implemented two major activities under the project 'Enhance Gender Sensitive Approaches among State and Non-state Actors to Prevent and Counter Violent Extremism in East and Horn of Africa' which is supported by the Government of Sweden through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). The month of December marked one year since the Centre started implementing the SIDA funded project.

We remain grateful for your continued support in preventing and countering violent extremism in the region and beyond. Do enjoy reading this last issue of year 2023. Thank you!

Dr. Simon Nyambura  
Director, ICEPCVE



## In Pursuit of Gender Sensitive P/CVE Legislations



With support from the Government of Sweden through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), the Centre held the first ever regional meeting that brought together legislators based in East and Horn of Africa on 6-8 December 2023 in Mombasa, Kenya to enhance their capacities to conduct gender audits in the existing legislations designed to prevent and counter violent extremism and terrorism.

Group Photo: The Inaugural Regional Legislators Meeting

### **Gender Aspects in Existing P/CVE Legislations**

The regional legislators meeting provided a platform to disseminate findings of a research that the Centre had commissioned to review the gender perspectives in the existing legislations, policies and strategies addressing violent extremism and terrorism in East and Horn of Africa. This inaugural convening of legislators that sit in peace and security committees in their parliaments was critical in enhancing their understanding on gender dynamics and appreciation on why it is important they reflect in the legislations in place to prevent and counter violent extremism.



Legislators from Ethiopia Critically Review their Existing P/CVE Legislations

### **Gender Champions for P/CVE Legislations**

The legislators present at the regional meeting committed to be champions of gender sensitive legislations designed to prevent and counter violent extremism and terrorism in their countries and to examine inclusion of gender aspects in legislations tabled in their parliaments. This inaugural regional meeting saw the formation of the pioneer legislators network dedicated to advocate for gender sensitive legislations to prevent and counter violent extremism.



A Segment of the Legislators at the Inaugural Regional Meeting

As Somalia legislators we commit to highlight the work of the Centre of Excellence and to become the extended arm of this Centre to the Somalia government and Somalia people and wherever possible, help find sponsors -Hon. Hassan Hurre Ugas



The Somalia Legislators L-R: Hon. Bashir, Hon. Hassan, Hon. Lul

## Gender Sensitive Counter Messaging

Accurate, timely and sensitive messages by government following violent extremism and terrorism incidences is a critical response function which reassures the publics, mitigates fears of further attacks, addresses misinformation and counters the extremists' narratives. There is need to augment capacities of government officials responsible for communicating with the public's so that they are able to communicate effectively during such unfortunate incidences in the event they occur.



Group Photo: Regional Strategic and Crisis Communications Workshop

### **Integrating Gender Sensitivity in Communications**

With support from the Government of Sweden through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), the Centre held 'Regional Strategic and Crisis Communications Workshop to Enhance Capacity of Government Officials to Disseminate Gender Sensitive Responses to Violent Extremism and Terrorism Incidences' held 11-13 October 2023 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia which brought together spokespersons, media and communication officers based in ministries and specialized agencies dealing with P/CVE.



A group discussion at the Regional Crisis Comms Workshop

### **Augmenting Capacities: In Theory and Practice**

The government officials were taken through sessions on how to analyse their audiences, set objectives and design gender sensitive messages. Additionally, they undertook practical sessions on how to effectively handle media interviews while ensuring that gender perspectives were integrated.



Practical Session: Handling Media Interviews



Practical Session: Handling Media Interviews

### **Recommendations...**

Among the recommendations by the government officials to enhance gender sensitive in their communication efforts included having gender balanced representations within the communication teams, having regular in-house trainings on gender sensitivity in their messaging efforts and use of inclusive language that does not reinforce stereotypes.

### 41st IGAD Extra-Ordinary Session

IGAD convened its 41st Extra-Ordinary Session with its Heads of State and Government on 9 December 2023 in Djibouti. This session was critical in fronting practical recommendations to chart a course forward in fulfilling the aspirations of the Sudanese people for peace and stability and called for cessation of hostilities and resolution of conflict through dialogue. The Centre Director, Dr. Simon Nyambura took part in this critical convening.



*The IGAD Heads of State at the 41st IGAD Extra-Ordinary Session*

### IGAD Regional Budget Meeting

The Centre Director Dr. Simon Nyambura took part in the IGAD Regional Budget Meeting held on 18-20 December 2023 in Addis Ababa. The meeting was held with an aim of presenting the projected Budget for FY2024 and get approval from Committee of Ambassadors. The meeting was inaugurated by the IGAD Executive Secretary, H.E Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu who noted that the political and financial backing from Member States remained critical in strengthening IGAD initiatives at regional and national levels.



*The IGAD Executive Secretary hands over the Financial Report to IGAD Chair*

### IGAD Executive Secretary's Second Term in Office

29 November 2023 marked the official commencement of the second term of the IGAD Executive Secretary, H.E Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu. On his first day of his second four year term, the Executive Secretary held a meeting with all the IGAD staff to take stock of the achievements and challenges of his first term in office and shared his plans for the second term in office. In his inaugural address, the Executive Secretary thanked the IGAD staff, IGAD Member States, development partners for their continued support and emphasised on the need to sustain the regional peace. The Centre congratulates the Executive Secretary on his commencement of his second term in office and look forward to work under his visionary leadership.



*The IGAD Executive Secretary, H.E. Workneh Gebeyehu (Ph.D)*

## Women's Inclusion and Participation in Peacebuilding

The Centre led by the Director took part in an 'Institutional Capacity Building Training on Women's Inclusion and Participation in Peacebuilding' organized by the IGAD Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (RESGA). The training supported by the Government of Ireland took place 22-24 November 2023 in Naivasha, Kenya. The Director in his remarks noted that it is integral to devise practical strategies to enable meaningful participation of women in the peace processes as they are essential contributors.



Group Photo: IGAD Staff Present at the Training

## Visit to the Turkish Embassy in Djibouti

The Centre Director, Dr. Simon Nyambura and the Deputy Director/Head of Capacity Building, Mr. Mohamed Houmed visited the Turkish Embassy on 14 November 2023 and were warmly received by H.E Cenk Uraz, Ambassador of Türkiye to Djibouti. They had discussions on potential areas of cooperation with the Government of Türkiye and its institutions and agreed to develop a joint framework of cooperation.



L-R: Mr. Mohamed Houmed, Dr. Simon Nyambura, H.E Cenk Uraz

## Visit to the Swedish Embassy in Addis Ababa

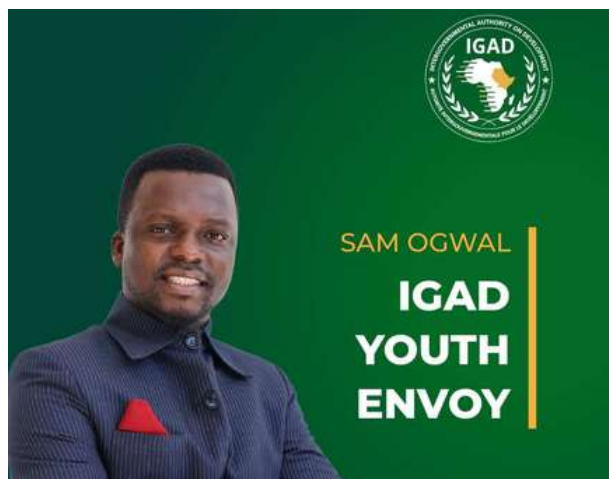
The Centre Director met with Mr. Joachim Beijmo, Head of Regional Development Cooperation, Embassy of Sweden in Addis Ababa on 19 December 2023 where they held discussions on the implementation progress of the joint project and exchanged ideas on future collaboration and cooperation with the Government of Sweden.



L-R: Mr. Joachim Beijmo and Dr. Simon Nyambura

## IGAD Youth Envoy

The Centre Director joined H.E Workneh Gebeyehu, IGAD Executive Secretary in the inaugural ceremony of the very first IGAD Youth Envoy, Mr. Sam Ogwal which was held on 28 November 2023 in Mombasa, Kenya. Youth remain critical stakeholders in preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) and the Centre looks forward to working with the appointed IGAD Youth Envoy in mobilizing a regional movement for P/CVE.



## Visits to the Centre

A team from the United Religions Initiative (URI)-Horn of Africa led by their Regional Director Amb. Mussie Hailu, visited the Centre on 2 November 2023. Enriching discussions were held on the importance of engaging faith based actors in supporting P/CVE efforts at the local level and how the fight against violent extremism can be augmented through inter-faith cooperation



Amb. Musie Hailu on the right with the Centre Team

Mr. Gilles De La Villeon, the Second Counsellor at the French Embassy in Djibouti paid a courtesy visit to the Centre on 4 October 2023. Discussions revolved around the work the Centre engages in to prevent and counter violent extremism in the region in addition to areas of mutual interest that can be leveraged on to advance P/CVE efforts in the IGAD region.



Mr. Gilles De La Villeon with the Centre Team

## IGAD Regional Gender Strategy & WPS RAP

The Centre took part in the Ministerial Meeting for the adoption of the IGAD Regional Gender Equality Strategy and the IGAD Regional Action Plan (RAP) for Women, Peace and Security (WPS) (2023-2030) held on 29 November 2023 in Mombasa, Kenya. IGAD remains committed in ensuring that women are meaningfully engaged in peace processes in the region.



Women of the IGAD Region Celebrate the Milestone

## SIDA-CVE Annual Review Meeting

The Centre held the Annual Review Meeting virtually on 23 November 2023 with the Government of Sweden officials to review the results achieved, lessons learned and adaptations made in course of implementing the SIDA funded project which aims to narrow gender gaps and amplify the voice of women in P/CVE efforts.



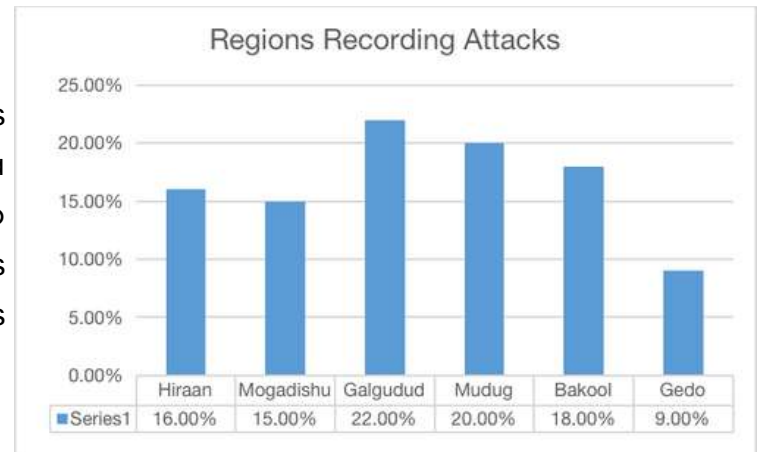
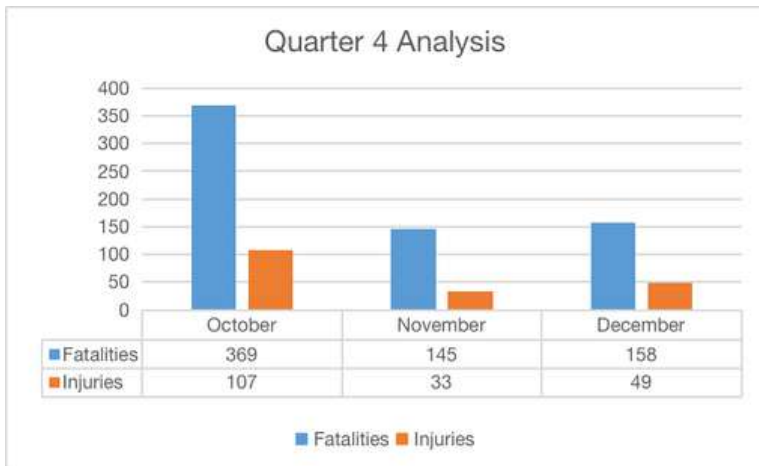
The Virtual Annual Review Meeting Ongoing

## Analysis of VE Attacks in the Quarter

The threat of violent extremism has been a major obstacle in the Horn of Africa undermining its peace and security. The last quarter of the year recorded the lowest number of attacks recorded compared to the previous quarters and consequently lower numbers of fatalities and injuries.

### Fatalities and Injuries

About six hundred and seventy two fatalities and one hundred and eighty nine injuries are recorded in the quarter. October recorded the highest number of fatalities and injuries at 55% while 22% and 23% of fatalities and injuries were recorded in in November and December respectively. A majority of those fatally wounded were security personnel at 63%, the civilians at 35% and local militias at 2%.

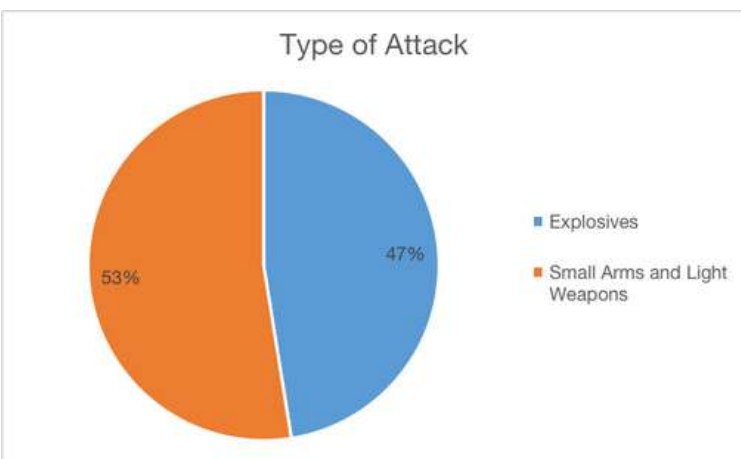


### Regions Recording Attacks

In the quarter under review, most of the attacks were carried out in Southern and Central Somalia including; Hiraan, Galgudud, Mudug, Bakool, Gedo and Mogadishu regions. There were attacks recorded in Mandera, Garissa and Lamu Counties in Kenya, mostly at the Kenya-Somalia borders.

### Tactics and Weapons

The tactics mainly employed to carry out the attacks were explosives as well as the small arms and light weapons. A majority of the attacks were carried out using small arms and weapons at 53% and the explosives at 47%. The explosives used include improvised explosive devices and the Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Devices (VBIEDs).



### Trends of the Attacks

The last quarter of the year recorded the lowest number of attacks compared to the other quarters of the year 2023 despite the month of December being flagged as a high risk period with increased attacks speculated due to significant dates in the Christian calendar. Historical data is indicative of an increase in attacks during significant Muslim and Christian dates but was different, in 2023 a phenomenon that could be attributed to the El-Nino rains which were experienced in November and part of December. With the continued deliberate destruction of telecommunication masts and persistent attacks at the border points by the terrorist groups, Member States in East and Horn of Africa need to be on high alert.

## Our Partners

We are grateful to our partners for the support which has enabled implementation of different projects towards building regional capacity to prevent and counter violent extremism



IGAD Member States



Government of Sweden



Government of Denmark



European Union



United States Department of State



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

United States Agency for International Development



Austrian Embassy Development Cooperation



African Union



Government of Italy



United Nations Development Programme

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